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Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits

Implementation of the agreed conclusions of the 1997 coordination segment of the Economic and Social Council on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report aims to provide the Economic and Social Council with the status of the follow-up activities requested by the Council in its agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system[1] so that the Council may take any further action necessary to ensure a full implementation of those conclusions.

2. Follow-up activities related to operational activities are addressed in the report of the Secretary-General entitled: "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development" (E/1998/54). Other related reports before the Council are the report on the mid-term review of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001 (E/CN.6/1998/3); and the report on follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (E/1998/53).

3. The status of follow-up to agreed conclusions 1997/2 is set out in section II below in a dual column layout: the left-hand column contains the provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2 that call for action; the right-hand column presents the status of follow-up corresponding to each action-oriented paragraph. The report concludes with a number of recommendations.

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II. Status of follow-up to agreed conclusions 1997/2 of the Economic and Social Council

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
A. The intergovernmental process of the United Nations	
The Council encourages the General Assembly to direct all of its committees and bodies and draw the attention of other bodies of the United Nations system to the need to mainstream a gender perspective systematically into all areas of their work, in particular in such areas as macroeconomic questions, operational activities for development, poverty eradication, human rights, humanitarian assistance, budgeting, disarmament, peace and security, and legal and political matters, taking full advantage of the outcome of the work of the Commission on the Status of Women.	The President of the Economic and Social Council, in a letter dated 23 September 1997 to the President of the General Assembly, asked that the attention of the Chairpersons of the Main Committees be drawn to the agreed conclusions and that the recommendations of the Council be given due consideration. The General Assembly, in its resolution 52/100 of 12 December 1997, welcomed the adoption by the Council of agreed conclusions 1997/2, and endorsed the definition, set of principles and specific recommendations for gender mainstreaming that they contained. It directed its committees and other bodies to mainstream the gender perspective systematically into all areas of their work, and requested the Secretariat to present issues and approaches in a gender-sensitive manner when preparing reports so as to provide the intergovernmental machinery with an analytical basis for gender-responsive policy formulation. It requested the Council to ensure that gender mainstreaming would be an integral part of all its activities concerning integrated follow-up to recent United Nations conferences, building upon its agreed conclusions 1997/2
All bodies that deal with programme and budgetary matters, including the Committee for Programme and Coordination, should ensure that all programmes visibly mainstream a gender perspective.	The Committee for Programme and Coordination, at its thirty-sixth session, had agreed to ensure that the mainstreaming of a gender perspective was reflected in the individual programmes of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001. The Committee, at its thirty-eighth session in June 1998, reviewed the progress report on the medium-term plan.
Other intergovernmental bodies with similar responsibilities in the United Nations system – for instance, the governing bodies of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund (UNDP/UNFPA), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Programme of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the specialized agencies – are encouraged to monitor the way in which the concerned agencies, funds	Various governing bodies of specialized agencies, funds and programmes have taken into consideration elements of the gender perspective in their planning and programming, as follows: (a) Gender, population and development is a cross-cutting theme in all UNFPA programmes and activities. Before approval, all programmes are reviewed on the extent to which they incorporate a gender perspective. Regular evaluations are conducted. A current initiative to revise UNFPA's budgetary classification system for programmatic and technical operational

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
and programmes implement gender mainstreaming in their respective medium-term plans and programme budgets, including at the field level.	activities takes into account the multidimensional aspects of gender, population and development to facilitate the monitoring of the financial support for gender mainstreaming; (b) An intergovernmental mid-term review in 1998 by the UNCTAD/Trade and Development Board of the implementation of decisions made by UNCTAD at its ninth session will assess achievement of objectives, including the integration of gender as a cross-sectoral issue. The programme budget of the International Trade Centre-UNCTAD/World Trade Organization (WTO) contains specific gender-related programmes and outputs; (c) Greater attention to accountability, coordination and monitoring mechanisms for gender mainstreaming will be an integral part of UNICEF's new medium-term plan; (d) Women are recognized as a priority group in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Medium-Term Strategy 1990-2001, which includes 10 special projects on women and girls, including women's role in a culture for peace; (e) The Women in Development Plan of Action of 1995, adopted by the FAO Conference at its twenty-eighth session, in November 1995, constitutes a global framework with specific and clearly identified contributions from all technical divisions. The FAO Advisory Committee on Women coordinates and monitors implementation, with detailed progress reports submitted to each session of the Conference; The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality (IACWGE) noted that greater efforts needed to be made so that programme budgets are prepared in a way that clearly reflect a gender perspective. To that end, the Committee recommended that the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) invite each United Nations agency to examine and – if necessary – to consider revising its classification system, budget codes and financial monitoring system to systematically and explicitly account for and track budget allocations and expenditures to gender mainstreaming and women-in-development programmes. IACWGE itself is continuing its work on budget codes and tracking of financial expenditures.

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
The Council will take steps to strengthen its harmonization and coordination of the work programmes of the functional commissions, as well as the interaction between the Council, the functional commissions and other subsidiary bodies, to accelerate gender mainstreaming. To this end, the Council entrusts its bureau with establishing or strengthening a dialogue with the chairpersons and bureaux of those bodies, as well as a dialogue between them, with the active support of the Chairperson and Bureau of the Commission on the Status of Women.	The President of the Council transmitted agreed conclusions 1997/2 to the Chairpersons of the functional commissions in a letter dated 5 December 1997, and sought their active cooperation and support in implementing the Council's recommendations. The Bureau of the Council subsequently met with the Bureaux of four functional commissions (Commission on Population and Development, Commission for Social Development, Commission on the Status of Women and Commission on Sustainable Development) to discuss agreed conclusions 1997/2, including how to implement mainstreaming a gender perspective in the work of intergovernmental bodies within their respective areas of responsibility. To assist the Council in its role of ensuring harmonization and coordination of the work programmes of the functional commissions, a consolidated report on the outcomes of subsidiary bodies will be before the Council.
The Council calls upon all of its functional commissions and subsidiary bodies to mainstream a gender perspective in their work, and in this regard: (a) To adopt, as a first step, an explicit decision on mainstreaming a gender perspective in their work;	During their recent sessions, several functional commissions have either continued to address gender issues or dealt with a particular issue from a gender perspective or both. A summary of such activities is contained in the report of the Secretary-Gender on follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (E/1998/53). New initiatives based specifically on the agreed conclusions include the decision of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to mainstream a gender perspective into all its activities and to request the Secretariat to integrate a gender perspective into all activities of the Centre for International Crime Prevention. The Statistical Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Coordination, at its nineteenth session, in February 1998, adopted a statement on follow-up to the agreed conclusions. The Commission on Human Rights encouraged the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in collaboration with the Division for the Advancement of Women, to elaborate a gender mission statement and strategies for effectively implementing the agreed conclusions.
(b) To make maximum use of the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women on the 12 critical areas of concern[2] when monitoring implementation of global conferences; (c) To take into account the work of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights in the area of enjoyment of human rights by women.	The report of the Secretary-General on integrated and coordinated implementation and follow-up of major United Nations conferences and summits submitted to the Council at its session on that topic in May 1998 made recommendations on how to ensure exchange of inputs among the functional commissions on cross-cutting issues, including gender, in the monitoring and review of global conferences (see E/1998/19, paras. 18 (ii) and 28 (iii) and (vii)).

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
	The outcome of the discussions in the Commission on the Status of Women on the enjoyment of human rights by women was made available to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-fourth session, in 1998, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/99. The Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women addressed the Commission on Human Rights, along with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women. The need to strengthen the links between the activities of the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women was discussed.
The Commission on the Status of Women is urged: (a) To provide suggestions to other functional commissions and the Council on gender mainstreaming;	The Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women, in a letter dated 9 February 1998 to the President of the Council, made a number of valuable suggestions. For example, the functional commissions, through their Chairpersons, could be encouraged to: (a) Request their secretariats to ensure that all reports present issues and approaches in a gender-sensitive manner so as to provide the intergovernmental machinery with an analytical basis for gender-responsive policy formulation. They might also request their secretariats to prepare reports highlighting the major gender implications as they arise from the work covered by the respective commissions; (b) Ascertain the steps taken by their respective secretariats to implement agreed conclusions 1997/2, including the existence of sector-specific gender-mainstreaming strategies, the existence of institutional directives, the use of gender-sensitive guidelines and checklists for programming, and the establishment of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess outcomes for women in the sectoral programme; (c) Request their respective secretariats to prepare reports on how best they could implement the agreed conclusions on gender mainstreaming; (d) Ascertain the extent to which a gender perspective is taken into account when reviewing proposed programmes of work and medium-term plans of their secretariats; (e) Assess their role in conference follow-up. I.e., commissions, within their area of responsibility, might wish to ensure that they highlight in their decisions the attention given to gender-mainstreaming as well as to the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
	The elements of these suggestions were discussed when the bureau of the Council met with the bureaus of four functional commissions
(b) To use the work of other functional commissions as it relates to the 12 critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action – for example, in 1998, that of the Commission on Human Rights and, in 1999, that of the Commission on Population and Development – in dealing with priority themes.	A number of reports submitted to the Commission on Human Rights, such as the reports of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, are made available for information to the Commission on the Status of Women when dealing with relevant issues (see, for example, the documentation listed under item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda of the Commission at its forty-second session). For the 1998 sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights, the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights prepared a joint report on women's full enjoyment of their human rights, in particular those relating to the elimination of poverty, economic development and economic resources (E/CN.4/1998/22-E/CN.6/1998/11), which was submitted to the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women to facilitate consideration of these issues by the two Commissions in a coordinated manner. Both Commissions called for further strengthening of cooperation and coordination between the two Commissions and between the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Division for the Advancement of Women. The Commission on the Status of Women, in considering the critical area of concern "Women and health" in 1999, is expected to receive inputs from the Commission on Population and Development, with special emphasis on the linkages between health and development, as well as on gender issues and family. Similarly, the Statistical Commission and its secretariat support the work of the Commission on the Status of Women and intergovernmental bodies responsible for statistical development in specialized fields of statistics, such as health, education and employment, to ensure the inclusion of a gender perspective in those fields, as reflected in the various technical publications and statistical database.
Regional commissions are requested to assume a catalytic role in exchanging experiences and best practices as well as promoting cooperation in gender mainstreaming on a regional level.	To this end, the regional commissions have taken action on women's issues and to mainstream a gender perspective into the Commissions' programme of work, as follows:

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
	(a) The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has initiated a process of gender-mainstreaming into all its programmatic and operational activities. In the process of restructuring and redefining its role, gender has been defined as one of the priority areas and a cross-cutting issue within ECA's substantive activities. The following measures have been identified: (i) Placing gender focal points in each of the five substantive divisions, as well as in each of the five subregional development centres; (ii) Strengthening the African Centre for Women so that it can initiate and advocate the process of mainstreaming gender in all ECA programmes and activities, as well as in national development programmes of member States; the Centre plans to address the process of defining modalities of collaboration with all the substantive divisions and refining indicators that will be used to monitor the effort at gender mainstreaming, in terms of both preparing programmes and allocating resources; (iii) Convening a number of subregional meetings, including an international conference on the theme "African women and economic development: investing in our future"; (b) The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) has taken steps to mainstream the gender perspective in its principal subsidiary bodies. Initial intergovernmental discussions have already been held in the areas of human settlements, environment and trade. Support to disaggregate statistics by sex in ECE countries has been provided on a regular basis; (c) In 1997, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean designed a gender mainstreaming strategy. All activities that are carried out in the member countries are to include a gender perspective; (d) The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is mainstreaming women's issues through an interdivisional coordinating mechanism to promote mainstreaming and integrating priorities of the Beijing Platform for Action into its work

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
	programme. Various divisions are working on such issues as gender statistics, female migration, gender and the emerging trade agenda, women and technology, women in local governance, and women and sanitary water supply. In addition, various studies undertaken by ESCAP have either included special chapters/papers on women or have taken into consideration the impact of policies on women. All programme managers have been tasked with ensuring that gender concerns are incorporated into programmatic and operational activities. ESCAP is developing a strategy and a plan of action to further mainstream a gender perspective into its work programme; (e) A working group on gender mainstreaming in ESCWA's work programme has been established, composed of both women and men. It will propose to ESCWA a work plan for ESCWA to meet the immediate and long-term requirements of gender mainstreaming.
The Secretariat is requested to present issues and approaches in a gender-sensitive manner when preparing reports so as to provide the intergovernmental machinery with an analytical basis for gender-responsive policy formulation and to ensure that the intergovernmental machinery is made aware of the decisions and recommendations of other relevant bodies in relation to gender mainstreaming.	In his letter of 13 October 1997, the Secretary-General transmitted the agreed conclusions for action to all senior officials in the United Nations system [3] He asked that analytical reports and recommendations on policy or operational issues be presented for intergovernmental decision-making in a manner that fully accounts for gender differences. The Division for the Advancement of Women has continued to provide comments and inputs to reports prepared by other parts of the United Nations Secretariat in an effort to strengthen attention to gender issues. Emphasis is placed on providing input at an early stage of the research and drafting process so that gender considerations may influence the approach taken in a report.
Under an item entitled "Integrated follow-up of major United Nations conferences", the Council will monitor annually the way in which its functional commissions and subsidiary bodies mainstream a gender perspective on the basis of the report on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women.	The provision is being implemented as of 1998. It should be recalled that the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (E/1998/53) addresses activities in the area of advancement of women and gender-mainstreaming by other bodies reporting to the Council and coordination at the inter-agency level.

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
B. Institutional requirements for gender mainstreaming in all policies and programmes	
The Council welcomes the Secretary-General's commitment to mainstreaming a gender perspective and encourages him to demand accountability from senior managers for gender mainstreaming; in this regard, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women is encouraged to continue to fulfil her important role	The Secretary-General, in his letter of 13 October 1997, stressed that gender mainstreaming was the responsibility of all staff, and emphasized the accountability of senior managers for implementation of the agreed conclusions. Senior managers were invited to take a number of steps, including the formulation of specific strategies for ensuring that gender issues were brought into the mainstream of activities of each senior manager's area of responsibility; the systematic use of gender analysis in the preparation of reports or in operational activities; and the preparation of medium-term plans and programme budgets in such a manner that a gender perspective was apparent. The Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women followed up on the Secretary-General's letter of 13 October 1997 so as to establish an ongoing exchange with senior managers of the United Nations system on the practical implications of gender mainstreaming, and so facilitate their efforts in this regard. She also held exchanges of view with the Under-Secretaries-General for Political Affairs, Internal Oversight Services, Peacekeeping Operations, Disarmament Affairs, and Economic and Social Affairs and their staff to discuss steps to be taken in order to mainstream a gender perspective in the work of their departments/offices.

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
In the ongoing reform process within the United Nations system, *inter alia*, in the work of the executive committees, the systemic integration of a gender perspective should be ensured.	The Secretary-General, in his letter of 13 October 1997 to the Conveners of the Executive Committees, asked that due consideration be given to gender issues, and that the reports on the work of the Executive Committees include an assessment of progress in the process of gender mainstreaming in the areas falling within the remit of each Committee. The Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs established a working group on gender issues and held discussions on gender mainstreaming. It decided to formulate a statement of policy on the commitment of its member entities to adequately cover gender aspects in their reports and to reflect the gender perspective in intergovernmental processes and in the composition of expert groups. The Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs has devoted considerable time and attention to gender issues in Afghanistan, to which an inter-agency gender mission was sent under the leadership of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women with a view to developing a consistent basis for United Nations activities in that country. The Executive Committee of the United Nations Development Group has established a subgroup on gender. The Executive Committee on Peace and Security is also making efforts to reflect gender in its discussions.
The Council encourages the efforts of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) to develop a mission statement on gender mainstreaming and trusts that such a statement will send a clear and concrete message to the system and will be applicable system-wide.	The Secretary-General, in his letter of 13 October 1997, had expressed his intention to pursue the need for a systematic approach to gender mainstreaming in ACC. ACC, at its first regular session of 1998, adopted a statement prepared by the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, entitled "Gender equality and mainstreaming in the work of the United Nations system: a commitment for action". The statement refers to the need to implement the recommendations on gender mainstreaming as elaborated in the agreed conclusions. The Special Adviser, in her capacity as Chairperson of the Inter-agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, subsequently sent the statement to all senior officials in the United Nations system, encouraging them to give the statement the attention and visibility it deserved.
The heads of the specialized agencies are encouraged to establish accountability of senior managers for gender mainstreaming.	The report of the Secretary-General entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development" (E/1998/54) addresses the issue of accountability.

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
All entities of the United Nations system making full use of the expertise and support of gender units or focal points – the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Secretariat, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality – should institutionalize mainstreaming of a gender perspective at all levels through specific steps, including:	UNFPA has taken specific initiatives: it held a workshop in October 1996 on gender, population and development for headquarters staff and advisers to country support teams and technical support services on how to institutionalize gender; in continuation of that workshop, a week-long consultation was held in September 1997. UNFPA is also formulating a draft conceptual framework and preliminary indicators on gender mainstreaming.
(a) The adoption of gender mainstreaming policies and the formulation of specific mainstreaming strategies for sectoral areas;	UNICEF's mission statement reaffirmed that promotion and protection of equal rights for women and girls and full participation in community life are important objectives of UNICEF. A gender perspective is reflected in education, health, nutrition, water and environmental sanitation. A UNDP guidance note on gender mainstreaming, which has been sent to all country offices, spells out the commitment, competencies and accountability measures needed to make gender mainstreaming a reality; the guidance note highlights corporate responsibilities, outlines skill requirements and provides guidance on the programming and management dimensions of gender-mainstreaming. At the World Bank, regional gender action plans have been prepared by each of the six regional vice-presidencies, establishing regional priorities and proposing concrete actions and strategies at the national, subregional and regional levels. Performance indicators are being refined to monitor progress in implementing those strategies. Several World Health Organization (WHO) programmes have specific strategies to ensure gender-mainstreaming in plans and operational activities; other programmes are in the process of doing so. To promote a systematic integration of a gender dimension across the board, a WHO policy on gender and health will be developed by mid-1998. At Habitat, 78 field offices to date have submitted plans setting out their strategies for gender-mainstreaming within their country programmes. It adopted a comprehensive policy paper and action plan entitled "Gendered habitat working with women and men in human settlements development" and is working on the mechanisms for implementing this policy.

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	UNCTAD held an internal workshop to discuss ways and means of bringing gender issues into the mainstream of UNCTAD activities and of mainstreaming a gender perspective as a cross-sectoral issue.
	UNIDO and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights will consider gender policy and modalities for the implementation of gender mainstreaming.
	UNU will pay specific attention to gender-mainstreaming in the framework of developing the University's strategic plan as well as a personnel policy. The agreed conclusions will be used for academic activities, in particular the University's World Institute for Development Economics Research and Institute for New Technologies.
	The Department of Political Affairs conducted a workshop/teambuilding exercise for all levels of staff to develop modalities for reflecting a gender perspective in its work. This was followed by a "Town Hall" meeting to discuss the insights gained from the workshop.
	The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in cooperation with the Division for the Advancement of Women, is developing a project on mainstreaming a gender perspective in multidimensional peacekeeping.
(b) The use of institutional directives rather than discretionary guidelines for gender mainstreaming;	Further efforts are required. The report of the Secretary-General entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development" (E/1998/54) addresses these issues in greater detail.

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
(c) The improvement of tools for gender mainstreaming, such as gender analysis, the use of data disaggregated by sex and age and sector-specific gender surveys, as well as gender-sensitive studies, guidelines and checklists for programming;	UNFPA supports efforts to systematically use gender analysis and to collect data disaggregated by sex. FAO's Women and Population Division has undertaken a number of initiatives, including generation and provision of data disaggregated by sex and age, at headquarters and in the field. Gender mainstreaming is a cross-sectoral common theme at UNIDO, done through application of gender analysis throughout project cycles. Within UNHCR, all branch offices have been encouraged to collect disaggregated data on the sex and age of refugee groups for more efficient planning programmes through the people-oriented planning process, which is a gender analysis framework and takes into account the mainstreaming of gender perspective. UNRISD has ongoing research programmes on gender on the themes: "Technical cooperation and women's lives: integrating gender into development policy" and "Gender, poverty and well-being". Other research programmes also pay attention to gender, such as the war-torn societies project; the grass-roots initiatives and knowledge networks for land reform in developing countries; community perspectives on urban governance; and social development and public policy. UNDP has a research programme, in collaboration with UNRISD, on gender and poverty indicators. ECA's African Centre for Women is preparing a gender analysis kit which will be integrated into its programmes. Its various divisions have begun to disaggregate data by sex. UNICEF, UNEP and WHO are making efforts to improve their collection, dissemination and use of gender analysis and data disaggregated by sex. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs will place greater emphasis on the systematic use of data and information disaggregated by sex and age, and of sector-specific gender surveys and studies in reports prepared by the Department. It is also assessing the extent to which its "flagship reports" can more systematically be informed by gender analysis and include specific information pertinent gender issues.

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(d) The establishment of instruments and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation; (e) The creation of accountability mechanisms for gender mainstreaming.	Further information can be found in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development" (E/1998/54) [4]
United Nations funds and programmes and specialized agencies should be requested to include an assessment of the steps taken to translate gender mainstreaming into country programmes and projects in their reports to the Council at its operational activities segment. All entities of the United Nations system should institute mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in their planning and programming.	The Council's attention is drawn to the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development" (E/1998/54).
The Council will assess the extent to which a gender perspective is being applied through institutional directives for planning and programming, in preparation of the comprehensive review of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001.	It will be recalled that the Council, by its resolution 1996/34, decided to undertake, in 1998, a comprehensive mid-term review of the implementation of the revised system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001, including a review of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective. The Council's attention is drawn to the report of the Secretary-General on this topic submitted to the Council through the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/1998/3) and the note by the Secretary-General on the same topic (E/1998/10).
The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, the Division for the Advancement of Women, INSTRAW and UNIFEM should better coordinate their support and catalytic activities. The annual reports of INSTRAW and UNIFEM should be made available to the Commission on the Status of Women for information.	The Council's attention is drawn to the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development" (E/1998/54).
C. The role of gender units and focal points in gender mainstreaming	
The location, seniority level, resources and participation of gender units/focal points are crucial. The role of such gender specialists should be strengthened.	The role of gender units and focal points in gender mainstreaming is discussed in detail in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development" (E/1998/54). The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and gender Equality is conducting a review of the women-in-development/gender focal point function in the United Nations system, with UNFPA serving as the task manager.

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
D. Capacity-building for gender mainstreaming	
To enhance system-wide gender sensitivity and gender expertise through training all entities of the United Nations system should: (a) Integrate a gender perspective into all training programmes;	Many United Nations entities continue to train their staff in the use of gender analysis, and several have stepped up their efforts. The reports of the Secretary-General on the mid-term review of the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001 (E/CN.6/1998/3) and entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development (E/1998/54) contain further details.[5]
(b) Provide continuous gender training for all staff;	The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality is compiling an inventory/database of all gender training materials and instruments in use in the United Nations system, with UNICEF and INSTRAW serving as task managers.
(c) Coordinate their training efforts through a system-wide evaluation of the impact of gender-training. The relevant agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system should consider making arrangements and, if necessary, drawing up additional protocols to existing memoranda of understanding	Although the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality is compiling an inventory/database, further efforts are needed for a system-wide evaluation of the impact of gender-training
To strengthen capacities for the collection, evaluation and exchange of gender-related information, a coordinated, system-wide effort under the leadership of the main coordinators for specific areas is needed for the development and systematic usage of, *inter alia*: (a) Gender-disaggregated statistics and indicators	The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, at its 1997 meeting, initiated efforts on the development of gender-sensitive indicators. The Committee, at its third session, in February 1998, recommended that United Nations system entities, both individually and collectively through the Committee, should closely monitor progress and, if necessary, provide inputs into ACC statistical work, the application of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) list of indicators for common country assessments and other initiatives endorsed by the Statistical Commission to ensure that gender equality issues are fully addressed. The United Nations Statistics Division contributes to the gender mainstreaming effort by its programme on gender statistics, which has produced two editions of the publication *The World's Women: Trends and Statistics*, a handbook for producing national statistical reports on women and men, an operational guide for national statistical offices and gender programmes, and the Women's Statistics and Indicators Database.[6] The Division, with the support of UNFPA, has also been working to disseminate gender statistics in more timely and user-oriented formats, and has worked with UNDP to improve statistics on paid and unpaid

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	work. It is also developing an international classification of activities for time-use statistics that will be relevant to a range of socio-economic statistics, including gender statistics. Those work elements create a statistical information support system for mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. The Population Division's work on demographic issues, migration and maternal mortality exemplifies its consistent attention to the gender dimension. Further efforts are needed, in particular on the development and usage of non-numerical indicators to monitor gender-mainstreaming. IACWGE is continuing its work in this area. Other United Nations organizations have also been making progress in the area of gender-related information. For 1998, UNESCO published a gender equality information kit on the rights of women and girls. The knowledge management system of the World Bank contains a gender component. In several UNICEF country programmes, the multiple indicator cluster surveys used to monitor progress towards the goals of the World Summit for Children have introduced the collection of data disaggregated by sex and age.
It is recommended that the General Assembly and the Commission on the Status of Women be regularly provided with statistics on the number and percentage of women at all levels throughout the whole United Nations system. The ACC Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions and the International Civil Service Commission should monitor progress in staffing policies aimed at achieving gender balance.	The General Assembly, in its resolution 52/96 on improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat, reiterated this request. Preparations are under way to provide this information to the Assembly at its fifty-third session, by using information collected and assembled by the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions. A comprehensive report on gender balance in the United Nations system was discussed by the International Civil Service Commission at its forty-seventh session (20 April to 15 May 1998).
Capacity-building also requires the collection and sharing of best practices and lessons learned within the United Nations system and at the national level.	The report of the Secretary-General entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the role of women in development" (E/1998/54) addresses the issue of capacity-building in detail.
(a) The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality is encouraged to develop a standardized format for documenting and assessing gender-mainstreaming experiences in all areas of work; (b) The practice of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women should serve as a good example;	The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, at its third session, in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and gender mainstreaming, adopted guidelines for good practices (ACC/1998/3, annex V). A time-line was agreed for their compilation, and UNIFEM, in cooperation with UNDP, has been designated task manager.

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
(c) At the field level, United Nations operational entities ... should develop and share memoranda of understanding on gender equality goals.	
The Division for the Advancement of Women, acting as the secretariat of the Commission on the Status of Women, should play an especially active role.	The Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat continues to play an active role in generating new ideas, proposing practical suggestions and promoting constructive implementation of gender mainstreaming. It took the lead in organizing a workshop on gender mainstreaming for representatives of the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee's Expert Group on Women in Development in September 1997.
Capacity-building further requires recognizing the importance of working with national commissions, national institutions for the advancement of women and non-governmental organizations, in particular women's non-governmental organizations, and developing partnership with them.	The United Nations system has contained to work and develop partnerships with national commissions and institutions for the advancement of women, as well as with non-governmental organizations. For example, ECA is promoting gender equality through building strong partnerships and seeking synergy with African intergovernmental organizations, United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, donor countries, research centres and civil society groups. UNFPA supports non-governmental organizations activities on promotion and legislation regarding women's access to reproductive health care and rights. The Division for the Advancement of Women, in cooperation with ECLAC, is convening an expert group meeting on national machineries for the advancement of women, which will also assess their role, opportunities and challenges in gender mainstreaming, in preparation of the consideration of this critical area of concern by the Commission on the Status of Women in 1999. The Special Adviser transmitted to all members of the Inter-agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality the ACC guidance note for the resident coordinator system on conference follow-up, encouraging them to use the guidance note, in particular at the field level, also to strengthen consultations with non-governmental organizations and with national machinery for the advancement of women. She provided the gender focal points with copies of the directory of national machinery for the advancement of women.

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
Accountability structures for gender mainstreaming need to be introduced or strengthened. In this regard, the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality is encouraged:	The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality is continuing its work on indicators and budget codes to better guide United Nations system institutions to classify, budget and track thematic and cross-thematic allocations of expenditures to gender mainstreaming. This work will take into account and build on the recommendations of the Turin inter-agency workshop on field-level follow-up to global conferences on UNDAF and on other initiatives to coordinate country programming exercises. The Chairperson of IACWGE regularly provides oral briefings to the Commission on the Status of Women on the outcome of the sessions of the Committee, which meets just prior to Commission sessions.
(a) To prepare a catalogue of accountability measures, including performance indicators;	
(b) To establish a baseline for gender mainstreaming performance by identifying a number of core indicators;	
(c) To report regularly thereon, *inter alia*, to the Commission on the Status of Women.	
E. Gender mainstreaming in the integrated follow-up to global United Nations conferences	
In order to facilitate gender mainstreaming in the integrated follow-up, review and appraisal of global United Nations conferences, the Council urges all entities of the United Nations system to:	The three ad hoc ACC task forces on the coordinated follow-up to conferences have highlighted the importance of focusing on gender equality and the empowerment of women for achieving conferences goals. For instance, the guidelines of the Task Force on Basic Social Services for All factor in gender, and the Task Force on Full Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods has reaffirmed the need for a comprehensive countervailing strategy to combat discrimination faced by women, including gender-sensitive social policies, women-specific programmes and a supportive legal and institutional framework. For further detail, see the report of the Secretary-General on integrated and coordinated implementation and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits (E/1998/19).
(a) Apply a gender perspective to all conference follow-up and, where appropriate, adjust their implementation activities accordingly, including through targeted, women-specific projects;	
(b) To utilize gender analysis effectively to identify the differential impact of implementation on women and men.	ACC, following its review of the work of the task forces and with its recently adopted statement on gender mainstreaming, has expressed its determination to ensure that gender continues to be mainstreamed in the system's work on coordinated follow-up to conferences. At its second session in 1997, ACC requested its subsidiary machinery, particularly the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development, the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions and IACWGE, to further develop and strengthen dialogue and interaction in integrated follow-up to conferences, particularly in the light of the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective. A discussion on the modalities for strengthening such cooperation took place between the Chairpersons of the Committees during the Council session on integrated conference follow-up in May 1998.

Provisions of agreed conclusions 1997/2	*Implementation*
The resident coordinator should play a primary role in developing a coherent approach to gender mainstreaming in United Nations activities on conference follow-up at the field level, *inter alia*, through country strategy notes where these exist.	The reports of the Secretary-General on the coordinated follow-up to conferences (E/1998/19) and entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, capacity-building and resource mobilization for enhancing the participation of women in development" (E/1998/54) address this issue in detail. The Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, at its third session, noted that the perspective of resident coordinators was essential for strengthening the knowledge base at the field level with regard to implementation of gender-specific conferences recommendations. To that end, the Committee decided to convene a one-day workshop with resident coordinators and agency field staff at its fourth session for an exchange of views on how to strengthen implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and gender mainstreaming, particularly at the country level.
All United Nations gender experts/focal points at the field level ... should: (a) Establish a policy dialogue within sectoral areas ... (b) Facilitate linkages between national machineries ... and all non-governmental organizations ...	The report of the Secretary-General entitled "Advancement of women: implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the role of operational activities in promoting, in particular, the participation of women in development" (E/1998/54) addresses this issue. The ACC guidance note for the resident coordinator system stresses the importance of holding consultations with and providing support to non-governmental organizations and national machinery for the advancement of women in implementation of conference agendas.
Enhanced interaction among the Division for the Advancement of Women, INSTRAW, UNIFEM and national machineries for the advancement of women, such as national commissions, national institutions and all non-governmental organizations ... should be pursue	Cooperation continued between the Division for the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM and INSTRAW on the joint project WomenWatch, a United Nations Internet site on the advancement and empowerment of women.[6] Plans are under way to expand participation on the site to other United Nations entities to establish a gateway for all gender-related information and activities available in the United Nations system. The Division maintains and regularly updates and distributes a directory of national machinery for the advancement of women as a means of facilitating and increasing interaction between and among United Nations entities and national machineries.

III. Recommendations

4. Less than one year after the adoption of agreed conclusions 1997/2, the implementation of their provisions is still at its initial stage, although various entities of the United Nations system have certainly made some progress. The Council may wish to encourage the United Nations system to take further measures to implement gender mainstreaming as a matter of urgency and at the latest by the time of the five-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2000, as recommended under section II of agreed conclusions 1997/2.

5. The Council may wish to welcome ACC's adoption of a statement on gender equality and mainstreaming in the work of the United Nations system, and to urge that a gender perspective be mainstreamed in all institutions, policies and programmes by implementing the specific recommendations contained in agreed conclusions 1997/2.

6. The Council may wish to note that gender mainstreaming is an ongoing effort to be pursued in tandem by both intergovernmental bodies and their secretariats. It may wish to decide to request the Secretary-General, in his regular annual follow-up report on the Fourth World Conference on Women, to include an assessment of progress made in gender mainstreaming in the light of agreed conclusions 1997/2, to highlight new initiatives, and to identify shortcomings and make proposals on how they could most effectively be addressed.

7. The Council may also wish to invite its functional commissions and subsidiary bodies to adopt the steps proposed by the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women in a letter dated 7 February 1998 to the President of the Council, as noted in section II above.

8. The Council may also wish to decide that its contribution to the review of the World Summit for Social Development will fully reflect a gender perspective, taking into consideration its agreed conclusions 1996/1 on poverty eradication and 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming, and to request that any documentation to be prepared for that purpose provide an adequate basis to that end.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second session, Supplement No. 3, (A/52/3/Rev.1)*, chap. IV, sect. A, para. 4.

[2] The 12 critical areas of concern are: Women and poverty; Education and training of women; Women and health; Violence against women; Women and armed conflict; Women and the economy; Women in power and decision-making; Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; Human rights of women; Women and the media; Women and the environment; and The girl child.

[3] The following organizations and bodies have responded to the Secretary-General's letter: United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), UNFPA, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/WTO, Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, UNESCO, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), UNCTAD, World Bank, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), FAO, UNICEF, United Nations University (UNU), United Nations Office at Vienna, ESCWA, ECA, ESCAP, UNHCR; in addition, follow-up activities have been initiated by the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Office of Internal Oversight Services, the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Department of Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

[4] Some organizations have taken steps to implement these provisions: (a) UNIDO will monitor gender mainstreaming from the Director-General's Office; (b) since March 1997, UNFPA missions to 12 countries are being supported to assess the extent to which gender considerations are being effectively mainstreamed; (c) UNESCO is taking steps to introduce accountability at all levels, including among

senior officers and directors, to develop gender training and to introduce briefing sessions for department directors and representatives of member States; (d) the World Bank has established the External World Bank Gender Consultative Group, which meets annually with the President and senior bank management to provide recommendations on the implementation of World Bank gender policies; and (e) UNHCR is seeking to implement more staff and managerial accountability by incorporating gender-related issues in the core managerial and functional competencies of its new career management system.

[a] UNICEF has made measurable progress in developing staff competence and national counterparts in gender analysis and gender-based programming, through training and a network of technical support; training materials and strategies are being updated. UNIDO has conducted a series of gender workshops for staff at headquarters and field levels and additional meetings with operational staff for further implementation. WHO is currently developing a training strategy to strengthen capacity in gender-planning, policy appraisal and impact assessment, and project analysis and evaluation. The World Bank will launch a greatly expanded gender training programme for staff in early 1998. FAO's major programme on socio-economic and gender analysis aims to train a wide range of stakeholders. UNOV's Human Resources Management Section will offer a series of workshops to enhance gender sensitivity and to provide guidance to those concerned on how to translate the concept of gender mainstreaming into programmatic and operational reality. ECA launched in November 1997 a gender training programme tailored to its specific needs, which is scheduled to address its Cabinet Office, all programme managers, regional advisers and all the staff of the African Centre for Women and Gender Focal Points. ESCAP has made a request to the Office of Human Resources Management of the United Nations Secretariat for gender training for ESCAP; in the interim, ESCAP staff members attend gender training provided by other agencies.

[b] Country tables from *The World's Women 1995*, updated yearly, are now available on the World Wide Web site of the United Nations Statistics Division (www.un.org/Depts/unsd/gender/intro.htm); an expanded and updated version of the Women's Indicators and Statistics Database is being prepared for release in early 1999.